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tion, not to mention mechanical difficulties, Kirschmann devoted himself to securing a method of comparing luminosities free from such defects. He lays down two principles: (1) that the two surfaces to be compared must be equally distant from the eye of the observer, and if possible, in the same plane; (2) the two surfaces must be in contact. A tube 20 cm. in diameter, coated inside with lamp-black, and adjustable to a length of 60-100 cm., furnishes a dark chamber. In front of this a rotation-apparatus sets in motion a disk 21 cm. in diameter, just covering the opening of the tube. This disk has two quadrants white; and in the others a band of black or gray, and concentric with it an opening through which one sees into the tube. Both these are regulated in quantity by an adjustable portion of a disk attached over them. The object now is to make the black band equal in intensity to the black of the tube seen through the openings. If the opening is a° wide and the black band b° , and the reflecting power of the black is called 1, of the white x , and of the tube 0, then $(360 - a)x = b + (360 - b)x$, or $x = \frac{b}{b - a}$.

This is under the supposition that the tube reflects no light, which is not strictly true. If we call the slight light coming from the tube with an opening of $1^\circ = k$, then the corrected formula is $(360 - a)x + a^2k = b + (360 - b)x$. And if in another case the settings are a_1 and b_1 degrees; then $(360 - a_1)x + a_1^2k = b_1 + (360 - b_1)x$; from which the two unknown quantities k and x can be found. So slight, however, is this value of k (estimates make it less than 1/5700 or 1/6800 of the reflection from white cardboard), that it is not detectable in the general result. A comparison of a band of "*Pariser Schwartz*" with white cardboard by this method gave a ratio of 1 to 66.2, which agrees well with 1 to 68, found by Lehmann. Continual use seems to increase the power of reflection of black; making the ratio in one case 1 to 51.2. Similar measurements gave with lamp-light a ratio of 1/60 (for black to white); with gas-light 1/58.2, and with diffused daylight 1/57.2. These differences are probably due to the impurity of the white of the cardboard. The following table of comparison with white cardboard of substances usually employed to produce black may be interesting:

	Lamplight.	Diffused daylight.
Paris black,	1/60	1/57.2
Indian ink,	1/23.6	1/20.2
Indigo,	1/26.8	1/27
Graphite (Faber BB),	1/8.6	1/8.9
“ (“ B),	1/6.2	1/5.9

This apparatus seems to be satisfactory and commends itself to various uses. J. J.

IV.—ABNORMAL.

De la Paralyse Générale d'origine traumatique. B. BALL. L'Encéphale, July, 1888.

Paralyse Générale d'origine traumatique. L. F. ARNAUD. L'Encéphale, November, 1888.

Prof. Ball reports three interesting cases of general paralysis of traumatic origin, and such cases are so rare as to merit special comment. The first was a postal employé who was thrown against the

side of a wagon. His hereditary antecedents and personal habits were irreproachable, and the disease was clearly traceable to the traumatism. The injury was received February 28, 1887, and death occurred from exhaustion, September 16, 1887, giving a period much under the usual duration. Dr. Arnaud's article is an account of the autopsy, which fully confirmed the diagnosis.

The second case was that of a mechanic who was struck by a ball of globular lightning during a severe thunderstorm. In this case, as in so many where the disease is dated from a fixed time, the traumatism appears to have been merely the shock necessary to light up into activity the disease which had existed in a dormant state for some months.

The third case is the most interesting of all; the patient received a blow on the left forearm, injuring the ulnar nerve, and followed by muscular atrophy. Mental troubles came on after the accident, and a well marked case of general paralysis developed. Here the general paralysis was directly due to the traumatism, and the case is of great interest from the exactness with which it was possible to show the origin of the disease.

W. N.

Ueber das melancholische Anfangsstadium der Geistesstörungen. LUDWIG SCHIRMAYER. Inaug. Dis., Strassburg, 1886.

The author tabulates statistics of 290 cases (melancholia 98, mania 69, paranoia (*Verrücktheit*) 88, feeble-mindedness (*Schwachsinn*) 20, distraction (*Verwirrtheit*) 15) in order to determine the frequency of a beginning in melancholia. Counting in the melancholiacs, less than one-half of all showed a depressed first stage; throwing out the melancholiacs (except some cases not fully observed), the proportion is only about one-fourth. Taken separately the proportions were, mania about one-third (or excluding certain cases for cause, about one-fourth), paranoia a little more than one-seventh, feeble-mindedness one-fourth, distraction over one-third. The melancholiac terminal stage, defended by some, was found in but few cases. Insanities are often preceded by conditions of ill-feeling, but this is by no means the melancholia of the alienist. The author's figures bring him into agreement with Witkowski, and into opposition with Arndt. The statistics are preceded by an extended summary of previous opinions.

Ueber Bewusstseinsstörungen und deren Beziehungen zur Verrücktheit und Dementia. Dr. J. ORSCHANSKY. Archiv f. Psychiatrie, Bd. XX, H. 2.

The author points out in a group of psychic conditions, variously named by various authors (*Verwirrtheit*, Wille; *la démence*, Esquirol; *acuter hallucinatorischer Wahnsinn*, Meynert; *acute primäre Verrücktheit*, Westphal; *acuter sensueller Wahnsinn*, Schüle; dreamy-condition of different authors) a common element, to wit, a deep obscuration of consciousness, or an "ataxy in the psycho-physic sphere." In a typical case the patient is cloudy in his conception of himself; the bounds of his *ego* and the non-*ego* are obscured; his notions of time and space are uncertain; memory images and acquired associations are weakened or lost; if at times he is able to recognize his surroundings, he is not able to connect the impression of them with similar impressions before received. As a consequence,